

An Overview of the Focus Groups established for the Zoning Code Rewrite Project

City Council Work Session
January 26, 2010

A stylized graphic of a city skyline in shades of gray. It features several buildings of different heights and widths, a prominent evergreen tree on the left, and a mountain range in the background.

CITY FORM
FLAGSTAFF
ZONING CODE UPDATE

Why Focus Group Work Sessions?



- The work of the Focus Groups was extremely valuable – thankful for the member's time and great ideas
- Suggestion that we hold a work session to update Council on the outcome of the Focus Groups
- Spread out over three meetings – more meaningful discussion
- Purpose is information for the City Council

Overview of the presentation



Quick overview of Focus Groups in general

Review of the following Focus Groups

Building and Fire Code

Design Guidelines

Downtown

Economic Development

Council discussion and questions

Focus Group Overview



- Provide opportunities for citizen participation and engagement – “grass roots” level
- Different to Regional Plan 2012 Update -- no Citizen Advisory Committee appointments by Council/BOS
- Technical in nature (Zoning Code) versus policy (Regional Plan)

Focus Group Overview



- 11 Focus Groups -- outcome focused on a specific issue or task

Building and Fire Code

Design Guidelines

Downtown

Economic Development

Housing

Landscaping

Neighborhood Planning

Outdoor Lighting

Process and Procedures

Signage

Trees and Resources

Focus Group Overview



- Initially strong membership; Evolved to a core group of typically 6-10 people (except Resources)
- Diverse interests and perspectives – all welcome
- Elected their own Chairperson (not an existing appointed official)

Focus Group Overview



- Elect their own Chairperson (not an existing appointed official) who also sits on CAG

Building and Fire Code

Steve Dorsett

Design Guidelines

Daniel Paduchowski

Downtown

Garrick Brooks

Economic Development

Brian Furuya

Housing

Brad Dixon

Landscaping

Gary Nelson

Neighborhood Planning

Kim Tittelbaugh

Outdoor Lighting

Wes Lockwood

Process and Procedures

Kara Kelty

Signage

Phil Keese

Trees and Resources

Steve Nelson

Focus Group Overview



- Their work is complete – 56 Focus Group meetings in 2-3 months
- Met from mid-April through mid-August 2008
- Very successful!
- Important – ideas, suggestions and opinions of citizens who participated
- Report complete – forwarded to consultant and on-line – being referenced and used now!

Citizen Advisory Group



- Chair and vice-chair of Focus Groups
- Another forum for citizen input
- Coordination between Focus Groups and Commissions
- Focused on overlapping themes and common issues
- Provided direction on the overall content of the final report and how the zoning code should address ideas provided by the Focus Groups
- 3 meetings

Focus Group Final Report



- Released August 10, 2009
- Comprehensive summary of the work of the Focus Groups
 - Overview of Focus Group purpose
 - Conclusions and recommendations
 - Overlapping themes and CAG comments
 - Recommendations forwarded to others
 - City staff
 - Regional Plan
 - PMO
- Available on the Zoning Code webpage

www.Flagstaff.Az.gov/zoningupdate

Focus Group Work Sessions



- January 26th -- Introduction/4 Focus Groups
 - Building and Fire Code
 - Design Guidelines
 - Downtown
 - Economic Development
- February 9th -- 4 Focus Groups
 - Housing
 - Landscaping
 - Neighborhood Planning
 - Outdoor Lighting
- March 9th -- 3 Focus Groups/CAG/Conclusion
 - Process and Procedures
 - Signage
 - Trees and Resources

Building and Fire Code FG



3 meetings held

- Include "pointers" or links to applicable sections of the Fire Code and Building Code
- Include description of the Fire and Building Codes as part of the introduction to the zoning code
(actually better in the Community Development Code)
- Review Title 4 of City Code – amend as necessary
- Pre-application meetings are really important!
- Good timing with the next round of IBC amendments (July 2010)
- Post adoption reality check – learn from past

Design Guidelines FG



6 meetings held

- Agreement that design guidelines were necessary
- Definition of Flagstaff's design tradition
 - "Simple elegant structures – balance, proportion and scale"
 - Illustrate with images for out-of-town architects
- Strengths of the existing design guidelines
 - Relatively easy to work with
 - Flexible measures are a good idea
 - Three level format (context, site, building) a good idea



Design Guidelines FG



- **Weaknesses of the existing design guidelines**
 - Need more consideration for solar design
 - Keep them more general with ranges for requirements (e.g. stucco)
 - Stucco and concrete are appropriate in Flagstaff
 - Lack a holistic sense – too fragmented
 - Narrows the ability to produce good design – eliminates the top 25% of good design and bottom 25% of bad
- **How to yield good design in Flagstaff**
 - Pre-application meeting
 - Images of Flagstaff appropriate designs
 - Design guidelines are necessary
 - Promote “Green” design and building as much as possible
 - Uniform application – no special breaks for affordable housing projects
 - Deal with the details!

Design Guidelines FG



- **Procedural/regulatory issues**
 - Establish efficient design review process – more pre-application meetings
 - Community supported code that is simple, clear, concise, effective, user-friendly
 - Requirement for licensed architect
 - No citizen Design Review Board
 - Engineering standards and resources dominate design



Downtown FG

5 meetings held

- Celebrate Downtown – it is special!
- Protect the historic fabric of Downtown
- Recommendations on building height
- Promote broader tenant mix and mixed-use in the long term
- A pedestrian friendly Downtown is important



Downtown FG



5 meetings held

- Parking Supportive of DMP and parking garages
- Strengthen the relationship between "Downtown" and "Southside" – they are one!
- No expansion of commercial uses outside of Downtown – protect adjoining residential areas
- Form-based Code – supportive!



Economic Development FG



4 meetings held

- Many ideas were policy recommendations – forwarded to the Regional Plan staff and CAC
- Ensure consistency with Regional Plan
- Connect economic development in Flagstaff with Regional Plan goals for Smart Growth and Flagstaff's unique character
- Community supported code that is simple, clear, concise, effective, user-friendly
 - Concern that Flagstaff is "development resistant" and the zoning code is unpredictable
 - Predictability is important!
- Increase the supply of industrial land in the City
- Promote cottage industries

Summary

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THE 5 Cs OF GOOD PLANNING

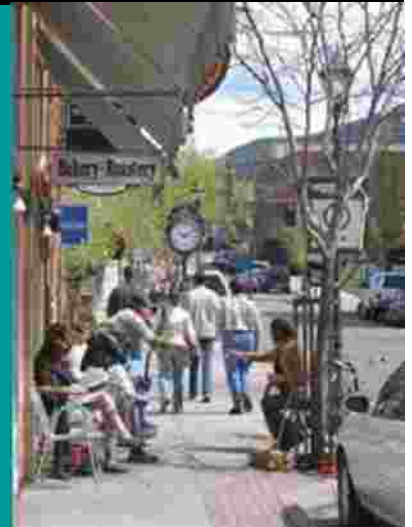
Compact

Complete

Connected

Complex

Convivial



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Discussion



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THE 5 Cs OF GOOD PLANNING

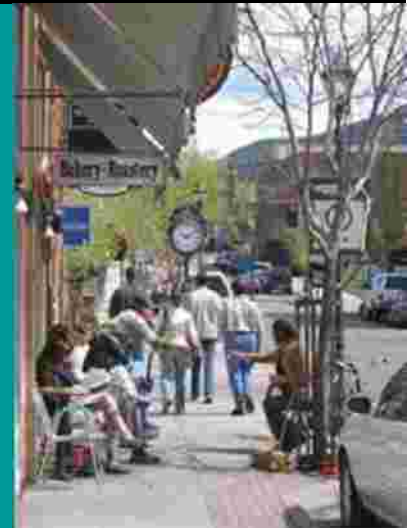
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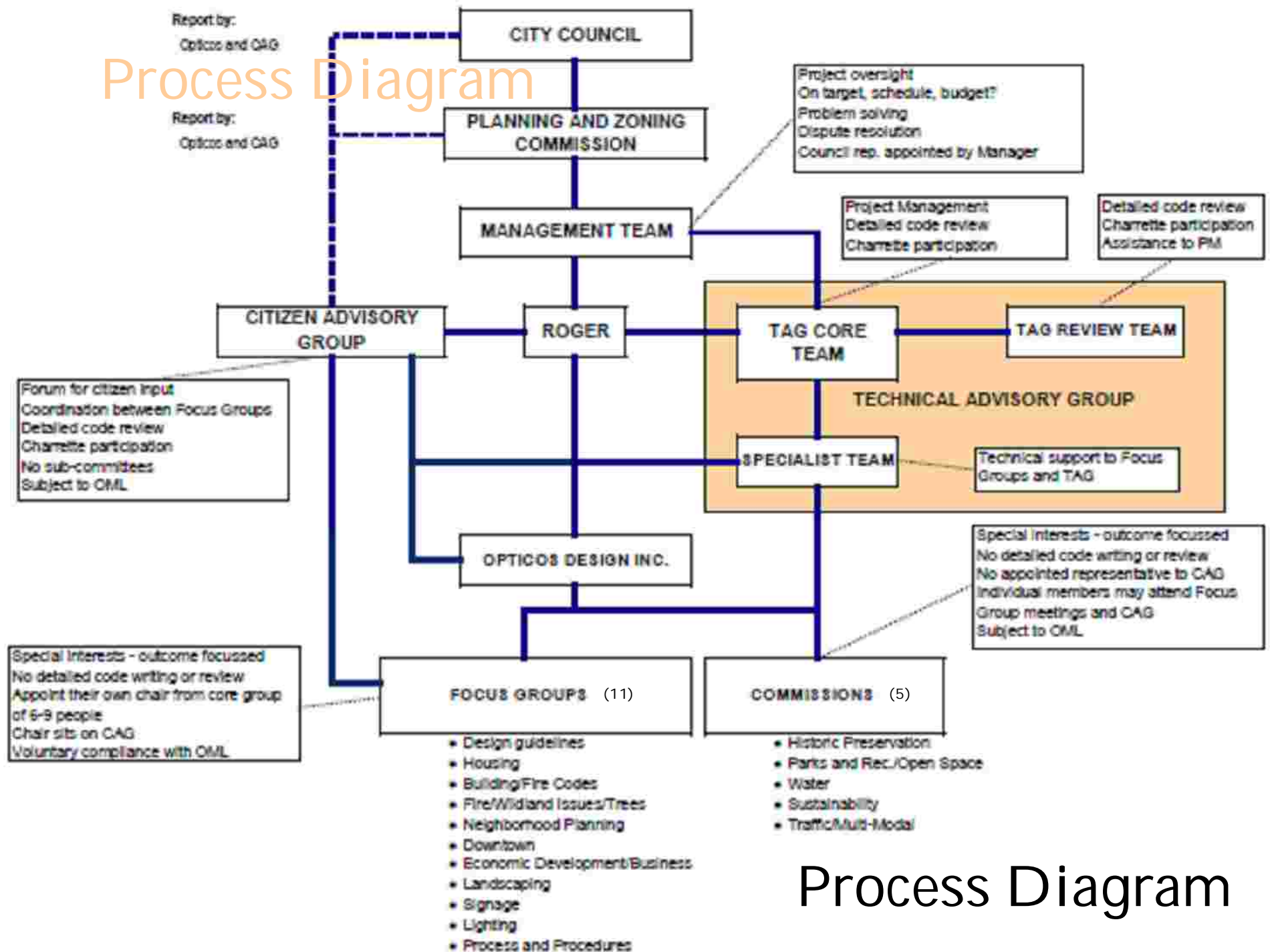
Complex

Convivial



Courtesy of Andres Duany

Process Diagram



Process Diagram

Focus Group Overview



- First meeting
 - Introductions
 - Review purpose and expectations
 - Roles and expectations of staff
 - Dot mapping exercise
 - Brain storming
 - Election of chair and vice chair
- Following meetings worked through brain storming results
 - Resolved issues
 - Further discussion
 - Not applicable
 - New issues